had observed in 23rd report that some of the coal blocks allotted as back as 1998 to 2000 have still not been developed and only 8 blocks have started producing coal. The Ministry of Coal in its reply to the Committee had, *inter-alia*, stated that of 19 coal blocks allotted up to 2002, 11 have already come into production and six more are expected to commence production during 2007. It was further pointed out that this fact was already given to the Standing Committee and was recorded in para 5.24 of the report. The Committee was further informed that the position has since improved on account of the measure taken by the Ministry such as intensive monitoring being done on regular basis, prescription of time-bound milestones, introduction of bank guarantee deposit system etc.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Ministry of Coal periodically monitors and reviews specific milestones laid down for development of coal blocks. In case of wilful delays, notices are issued and where warranted de-allocation of coal blocks is considered. Due to the following reasons it takes time to develop the coal blocks:

(i) The allocatees of coal blocks, who have not started production so far, are in various stages of obtaining statutory clearances and mining lease, preparing mining plan, acquiring land, machinery and equipments etc. for mining as well setting up end-use project. The progress achieved by them against certain given milestones is reviewed by the Screening Committee from time to time.

(ii) Development of coal blocks involves a long gestation period of about 3 to 5 years to reach production stage and about another two years to reach its optimal production capacity.

(iii) New players who enter the coal mining arena, take more time for organizing the pre-mining clearances and to develop the coal blocks.

However, the coal blocks are at different stages of development and by the end of the Eleventh Plan, these blocks are expected to contribute coal production of around 104 million tonnes.

Coal-mine accidents

1215. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of coal-mine accidents that occurred in India during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) the number of persons died in those accidents;

(c) whether Court of Enquiry was set in each case of accidents;

(d) if so, the major findings thereof; and

(e) the number of persons who have been punished so far for the negligence attributed to those accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) The number of fatal accidents occurred in coal mines in India and persons died in these accidents during the last five years are given below:

Year	Number of Accidents	Number of persons killed
2002	81	97
2003	83	113
2004	87	96
2005	96	117
2006*	79	138

* Figures are provisional.

(c) As reported by Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Court of Enquiry was not set up in each case of accidents. However, in the following accidents the Court of Enquiry was set up:

Date of Accident	Name of Mine	Company
16th June, 2003	Godavarkhani No. 7 LEP where accident occurred due to inundation of workings resulting in 17 fatalities.	Singareni Collieries Company Ltd.
17th Oct., 2003	Godavardhani No. 8A where accident occurred due to roof fall resulting in 10 fatalities.	Signareni Collieries Company Ltd.
15th June, 2005	Central Saunda where accident occurred due to inundation of workings involving 14 fatalities	Central Coalfields Limited
6th Sept., 2006	Bhatdih Colliery at Nagda mine where accident occurred due to gas explosion involving 50 fatalities.	Bharat Coking Coal Limited

(d) The details of major findings of the Court of Enquiry in the aforesaid mine accidents are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(e) On the basis of recommendations of Court of Enquiry, prosecution has been launched by Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) against six officials in case of GDK-7 LEP accident. Similarly necessary action for prosecution of two officials has been initiated by DGMS in case of GDK.8A accident. In case of Central Saunda accident prosecution has been launched against five officials by DGMS.

Statement

Details of major findings of the Court of Inquiry

(1) GDK 7 LEP mine Singareni Collieries Company Limited:

- Large quantity of water, estimated to be several thousand gallons, had accumulated in panel No.3S/SS-IA in No.3 seam bottom section which was extracted in the year 2000 by splitting as final operation in conjunction with hydraulic sand stowing. The accumulation was due to inter-granular space in sand, shrinkage of stowed sand with time, inadequate stowing.

- In an area, which was declared non-workable by the owner in 1999, development in 2 dip district in No.3 seam top section was started in April, 2003.
- This 2 dip development district in No.3 seam top section was being worked within 60 metres of the No.3 seam bottom section workings in panel No.3S/SS-1A. This work was done without taking prior permission from the Regional Inspector of Mines and without taking due precautions against the danger of inundation arising out of working close to water-logged workings.
- The parting between top and bottom sections of 3 seam which was to be kept atleast 5 metres, got reduced by roof falls occurring in 3 seam bottom section along the 2 metres throw fault plane. The parting must have been reduced to a few centimeters just before the rupture.
- The head of water, which was calculated to be about 15 metres, was enough to cause the rupture leading to sudden inrush in top section.
- The water rushed along 18L through the puncture in the form of a wall of a height of about 1 metre. After travelling southwards, it entered No.2 dip where 17 workers who were working in and below 19L and who were drowned in the inrushing water.
- Lack of supervision in mining in general and stowing of sand in particular. There is no system in place whereby after stowing any responsible officer would certify that stowing was proper and adequate before the district could be closed.

(2) GDK 8A Incline of Singareni Collieries Company Limited:

1. Extraction in panel No. 46B was started on 17th July, 2003, while extraction in adjoining panel No. 46A on the South Side, was still continuing. Panel No. 46A was sealed off on 30-9-2003. Panel No. 44 on the dip side and panel No. 41 on the North side of panel No. 46B had been extracted long ago.

2. If whole pillars are considered, then line of extraction was diagonal. However the permission under Reg.100 required diagonal line of faces *i.e.* faces in the line of extraction should have been diagonal. But as already mentioned earlier, one half pillar to the South-east of the slice, where the accident occurred, had been extracted fully ahead of the diagonal line. Thus, in the truly diagonal line of face extraction, part of the load, which would have been borne by the half pillar, shifted to the rib at the site of accident.

3. The first local fall occurred in night shift of 14.10.2003 followed by second one in night shift of 15.10.2003 and the third fall occurred on the night shift of 16.10.2003 causing the accident. The exposed area in the goal was 5160 sq. m at the time of accident.

4. Code of practice for induced blasting to bring down the hanging goal should that exceed 4000 sq. m not followed in the sense that depth of shot holes had been reduced and also the additional shot holes for induced blasting parallel to the goal

required to be made when the hanging goal are exceeded 4000 sq. m. were not completed in quick time.

5. Reduction of rib also appeared to be more than what could be considered judicious for the situation.

6. From the deposition before the Court and during the statutory inquiry by DGMS and also available records, it is apparent that there were indications of weighting in the working areas prior to the accident. Under the given geo-mining condition, weighting followed by the floor heaving could be expected before the local falls and the main falls indicating redistribution of the stresses. Apparently. the management failed to read the indications correctly.

7. Extraction in panel No 46B had been started while extraction in panel 46A on the south side was still in progress. This accident occurred only about 16/17 days after adjoining panel was sealed off. So it can be safely concluded that movement in panel No. 46A had not completely stopped at the time of accident. Load transfer due to interaction of the stresses from the adjoining goal probably led to the sudden dynamic loading for which the workers failed to get any early indication.

8. In 2nd shift of 16-10-2003, 1st dip slice of 55-1/2 LS/9 Dip got connected to the goal on the dip side and the rib on the south side was reduced by blasting. At about 1.00 A.M on 17-10-2003 (3rd shift of 16-10-2003). while loading of coal from the blasted rib was being done in the presence of some coal-cutters, support personnel and the sirdar, a local fall occurred in the goal which extended into the workings crushing the south side rib and ten persons were buried underneath it while two escaped with minor injuries.

(3) Central Saunda mine accident of Central Coalfields Limited on 15-06-2005:

The accident was caused due to connection between working district of Bansgarha seam and overlying water-logged abandoned workings of Hathidari seam caused by fall of roof. The accident occurred due to failure as keeping Hatidari seam (lying above and within 60m of working district of Bansgarha seam) free of water as required by condition number 5.3 of permission letter no. RR/10297/Perm-100(I)/03/2930 dated 20.11.03 granted under regulation 100 (I) of Coal Mine Regulation 1957. The scam was extracted beyond permitted area in panel no. II forming an exposure of fault plane constituted to the fall of roof and subsequently inundation.

(4) In case of Bhatdih (Nagda) Colliery of BCCL, the Court of Enquiry instituted is yet to submit its report.

Review of royalty on coal

†1216. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether some coal producing States have sought to increase royalty of States on coal;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government in this regard;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.